

Message Text

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EXDIS

DEPT PASS OTHER INTERESTED POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, UNSC, PINT, LE, IS, SY
SUBJ: LEBANON: NEXT STEPS TO DEFUSE CRISIS

REF: STATE 174090 AND PREVIOUS

1. IN MY JULY 11 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI, I BRIEFED
ALONG LINES OF REFTELS AND ASKED IF HE HAD ANY IDEAS OR
SUGGESTIONS TO OFFER.

2. NIMEIRI SAID HE AGREED WITH KUWAITI FONMIN'S
SUGGESTION OF A RETURN TO BASIC PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED
AT CAIRO AND RIYADH MEETINGS SETTLING UP ADF. THE PROBLEM
WAS THAT SAUDI AND SUDANESE CONTINGENTS OF ADF WERE
ALREADY UNDER CONTROL OF PRESIDENT SARKIS BUT SYRIANS WERE
NOT. THE KEY TO A SOLUTION LAY IN DAMASCUS. NIMEIRI
EXPRESSED HOPE THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS COULD BE DISSUADED
FROM REDIGNING BUT SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT SARKIS
WAS DOING EVERYTHING THE SYRIANS TOLD HIM TO DO. NIMEIRI
SAID HE WAS WORRIED THAT SUDANESE FORCES IN LEBANON MIGHT
GET INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING. HE SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT
WHEN SYRIANS WENT INTO LEBANON, THEY HAD A TWO-STAGE
PLAN. FIRST THEY WOULD GIVE A "GOOD HIT" TO THE PALESTINIANS,

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AND THEN THEY WOULD GIVE THE SAME TREATMENT TO THE CHRISTIANS.
THIS LOOKED LIKE WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

3. NIMEIRI THEN OFFERED THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS, ASKING
THAT IT NOT BE REVEALED, PARTICULARLY TO THE SYRIANS,
THAT HE HAD MADE THEM. HE BELIEVED THE ARAB LEAGUE
SHOULD BE CONVOKED, ON AN URGENT BASIS, TO MEET AT AN

ARAB CAPITAL OTHER THAN CAIRO, AS SYRIAN PARTICIPATION WAS ESSENTIAL. AT SUCH A MEETING TWO OR THREE OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES WOULD BE ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE FORCES TO THE ADF, SAY 2 OR 3 THOUSAND EACH. SYRIA WOULD THEN BE ASKED TO WITHDRAW ENOUGH FORCES TO REDUCE THEIR PRESENT VERY HEAVY PREPONDERANCE. MOREOVER, AT THE SAME MEETING THE LEAGUE COULD DRAW UP A NEW MISSION DIRECTIVE FOR THE ADF.

4. I REMARKED THAT SYRIA'S CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON WAS INCREASINGLY UNPOPULAR WITH MANY SYRIANS. NIMEIRI AGREED SAYING THAT SADAT HAD EXPRESSED TO HIM THE VIEW THAT THE INTERVENTION IN LEBANON WOULD END UP BY DESTROYING THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT. IN LEBANON, SAID SADAT, SYRIAN FORCES WERE LOSING THEIR MILITARY SKILLS, INDULGING IN WIDE SPREAD LOOTING AND GRAFT, AND BECOMING UNDISCIPLINED.
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